some other purposes. But it is not applicable to the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana.

Question No. 148 [The questioner (Shri Ramdas Aggarwal) was absent. For answer *vide* page 34 *infra.*]

Question No. 149 [The questioners (Shri Munavvar Hasan and Shrimati Jayaprada Nahata) were absent. For answer *vide* page 35 *infra.*]

Question No. 150 [The questioner (Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy) was absent. For answer *vide* page 36 *infra.*]

Phasing out of MIGs by HAL

*151. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU):
DR. KARAN SINGH:†

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited has drawn out a plan to phase out the MIG fleet;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of the MIG fleet at present with the Indian Air Force; and

(d) the reasons for phasing out the same?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (d) Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) does not decide on the operational phasing out of any aircraft. This authority vests with the Indian Air Force (IAF) after due concurrence of the Ministry of Defence. HAL is responsible only for manufacture, upgrade, repair and overhaul of aircraft. The production of MIG 21 aircraft and its variants and MIG 27 M aircraft, which were the only type of MIG aircraft manufactured by HAL, continued up to 1987

† The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Dr. Karan Singh.

and 1997 respectively. However, upgrade programmes continue for both aircraft.

The criterion for phasing out of aircraft is authorised Total Technical Life (TTL) in terms of hours of flying and this may itself be extended after fatigue tests, keeping the aircraft well within the safety margins required.

IAF MIG Fleet consists of MIG 21 variants (MIG 21 M, MIG 21 FL, MIG 21 Trainers and MIG 21 BIS), MIG 23, MIG 25, MIG 27 and MIG 29. For the present, these aircraft are expected to be in service with the IAF for quite some time.

DR. KARAN SINGH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, in the reply, it has been stated that "the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) does not decide on the operational phasing out of any aircraft. This authority lies obviously with the Indian Air Force." But, Sir, this being an important matter, it is essential that the HAL should also be consulted. It is the sole manufacturer of these kind of aircraft in the country. From the reply, it seems that the HAL has stopped producing these aircraft. Would the hon. Minister kindly enlighten the House as to what exactly the position is? Is it now dealing with only the upgradation of the aircraft, or is there some production situation in the pipeline?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Mr. Chairman, Sir, essentially, it is the upgradation that is taking place. As far as the first part of the hon. Member's observation is concerned, Sir, the fact of the matter is that it is the Indian air Force which decides about it, and at what stage a particular category of aircraft should be phased out. It is nowhere in the HAL's charter. Does it figure that the HAL shall provide the requisite advice to the Air Force or the Air Force obliged to take the HAL's advice in this matter?

DR. KARAN SINGH: Sir, we are one of the few countries in the world which has the capacity for production of such aircraft. Now, the Minister's reply seems to be somewhat negative, in the sense that it is not a question of who has the responsibility or not. It is an overall responsibility of the Defence Ministry of the Government of India to see that we have adequate aircraft. In this whole process, is our indigenous aircraft production capacity not going to be taken into

account whatsoever? Because the way the Hon. Minister has replied to the question gives the impression as if the HAL is simply a sort of corporation which is humming around in the background, and that it is only the Air Force which is staking decisions. Certainly, the Air Force will take the decision. But, are you not interested, are you not involved, in trying to devleop the indigenous aircraft production capcity? That is the thrust of the question.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Sir, the point is that the user decides up to what extent he can use a particular product. And the manufacturer cannot have his say as to how long a particular product that he has produced is going to be used by the user. So, Sir, I do understand the point which the hon. Member is trying to drive at, but the fact of the matter is that the HAL just does not figure in this.

DR. KARAN SINGH: But are there not consultations? Is there not technical consultation between the HAL and the Air Force and the Defence Ministry? The HAL is not a foreign company; it is our own company.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Taking all the facts together, I would say that the HAL does not figure in this.

Question No. 152 [The questioner (Shri P. N. Siva) was absent. For answer *vide* page 36 *infra.*]

सौर ऊर्जा का प्रयोग

*153. **श्री राजनाथ सिंह 'सूर्य'**: क्या गैर-पारंपरिक ऊर्जा स्रोत मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि सौर ऊर्जा की उपलब्ध क्षमता की तुलना में इसका प्रयोग बहुत कम है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो इसके क्या कारण हैं; और

(ग) देश में सौर ऊर्जा को लोकप्रिय बनाने के लिये सरकार क्या कदम उठा रही है?

गैर-पारंपरिक ऊर्जा स्रोत मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री (श्री एम० कण्णप्पन): (क) से (ग) एक विवरण सदन-पटल पर रखा है।